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On

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By

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In attempting the fulfilment of my duty on the present occasion, I have chosen Inflammation as the Subject of a few remarks.

It is not my intention however, to enter minutely into its treatment, but shall attend more particularly to the illustration of the pathology of the disease, by which I mean an explanation of the manner in which its phenomina are produced. But so far am I from intending to offer any thing new on the subject that I believe the profession have long since arrived at the ne plus ultra in their investigations of its nature. Inflammation in some form or other is one of the most common diseases of our country, indeed ours is the kind of climate in which inflammatory diseases are for the most part prevalent, for here we are almost constantly exposed to one of the frequent causes — change of temperature

Perhaps the relaxing effects of our hot humors by producing increased excitability predisposes us to this disease.

Symptoms. "In inflammation, perhaps the first observable expression is that of redness: to that succeed tumefaction; pain; increase of heat; and augmented pulsation, rather of the parts falling into disease, than the parts chiefly occupied and congested. Or perhaps it would be more consentaneous to observation, to assume that that these nosological signs in a given & relative degree are simultaneous." But it is evident that there will be a variation & addition of symptoms, according to the structure, or importance, of the part. For in erysipelatous inflammation all the above characteristics are not so evident; nor if an important viscous be attacked with only a slight inflammation, we have the characteristics of Cullens Phlegmasia —

Synocha fever; with inflamation or topical pain; the function of some internal part being at the same time injured. there of cases there would be an addition of symptoms. but as stated above it is the signes of inflamation, which are evident to the senses, which I am to investigate.

Causes — Any thing which will reduce the powers of life in a set of vessels, thus producing a consequential yealding of their coats to the impetus of the ordinary current, or vis a tergo; will produce inflamation. Under this head I include all causes, Mechanical, Chemical, &c but shall not enumerate them here but proceed at once with the pathology of the symptoms of inflamation, & first of redness — as observed above, the cause acts by lessening the tone of the vessels, & thus weakening their coats and taking from them the power to resist the force of blood sent on by the heart, this being

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the case, it follows of course that the vessels will be enlarged and distended with red blood, & in proportion to the quantity of blood in a part will be the redness, to a certain degree.

Tumefaction — two things conspire to cause tumefaction in an inflammation, first the effusion of the thin & colourless parts of the blood into the cellular substance, but as it has been ascertained by microscopic observation that the vessels of an inflamed part, are often enlarged to five or six times their natural size, it is evident that this will account for the greater part of the tumour.

Increased Heat — This is the symptom from which the disease took its name, & of course we should expect it to be one of its most constant characteristics. When we speake of increased heat we mean that the temperature of the part is higher than natural. on

Or we mean the relative condition of of the part spoken of, & that of the circumjacent parts. I believe it will be admitted that the blood is the medium through which heat is distributed to the system, and of course it follows that in proportion to the quantity of blood in a part will be the temperature of the part, unless from over distention the circulation nearly or quite ceases in the part, & then it changes colour becomes cold & dies. To prove the above position the farther it is only necessary to observe that it is ~~in~~ the capillary vessels which are inflamed, & in passing through them the blood has its capacity for caloric lessened, therefore heat is given out, & increases the temperature of the tumour. Another cause for the accumulation of caloric is, that there is less of

the calorie of the part lost by evaporation in consequence of the inability of the perspiratory functions of the part, as is the case with the whole surface in general fever. Pain — This is the symtom which attract the attention of the patient more than any other one.

It is a fact that in proportion as the life of a part is lowered to a given degree, the sensability o excitability is increased; now this is just the situation of the inflamed part, the cause lessens the vitality of the part, the nerves become more liable to receive impressions, while the enlarged o distended vessels press on o stretch them, thus producing the pain o tension.

The only symtom which remains to be spoken of is the increased pulsation

which is evident both to patient & physician in and about the inflamed part. The pulsation of an artery is produced by the wave of blood passing through, & distending it, and the only action which the artery has is to resist the distending force of the blood; therefore if as has already been stated this power of resistance is weakened, the wave will make a greater impression on the finger applied to it. This being the case with a number of vessels in the neighbourhood gives the throbbing sensation which is more forcible in the part to the patient than is natural, from the increased sensibility of the nerves of the part — on the principals laid down I think

we can account for the various symptoms of inflamation in whatever part it may take place. As respects the fact that general fever is sometimes the con-
-sequence of a local inflamation there is some differance of opinion concerne-
-ing the manner in which it is brought about. I believe it is by what is called sym-
-pathy, that is, the excitability of the part being morbidly increased makes an im-
-pression on the heart through the medium of the nerves, but this impression is first referred to the sensorium commune, & is reflected to the other parts of the system & produces a synocha fever &c.
Termination the most frequent termin-
-ations of inflamation are Resolution, Supuration, & Gangreen; writers have mentioned several others, but

I believe all that is usefull may be included under the three above mentioned heads; I shall therefore proceed to consider each seperatly & at the same time the treatment proper for them, and first of Resolution. When with or without the use of remedies the symtoms of inflamation disapear & the part gradualy returns to its former health & apearance, it is said that resolution has taken place. This is the the termination which we should endeavour to bring about as long as we see that there is any probabilety of effecting it to do which we first weaken the vis a tergo by bleeding, purging, & low diet. Continued nausea has been resorted to for the same purpose, but for the most part I should say that it is but a feble means it may however be resorted to

with advantage in some chronic forms of inflammation.

Our second indication is to empty the vessels of their contents & cause them to gather up, this we do by local blood-letting, & the aplication of such remedies as will restore the tone of the part: as stimulants, astringents, the aplication of cold bodies for the purpose of abstracting heat: and bandageing if the part be such as to admit of their aplication are in some cases of great benefit, as in cases where the inflamation has not been entirely discussed & there is some hardness & tumour remaining. in these cases ~~too~~ mercurial friction, is also, of great service indeed mercury as an auxiliary to bleeding is one of our most

useful remedies in inflamatory dis-
-eases, in such a case as that last mentioned
or rather that condition of parts it invigor-
-ates the parts & especialy the absorbents &
& thus causes an absorption of whatever
can not be taken of by the bloodvessels.

I will here also mention Seatons,
~~Issues~~ Issues, and Blisters; these may act
beneficially by the discharge which they
occasion, by Stimulating the vessels of
the inflamed part through the sensorium
commune, for the impression being
reflected to the whole system, & meeting
with the weakened & excitable part, it
Stimulates the vessels & causes them to
gather up: perhaps mercury may operate
in this way in producing its good effects.
There is an other means resorted to with great
advantage some times, whe[illegible]

mentioned — the proper position of the part; for instance if the leg be diseased it should be elevated to forty-five degrees, so that the specific gravity of the column of blood shall not oppose its return from the affected part.

When we discover that we can not effect a resolution & that suppuration will take place, which we know for the most part by the throbbing & rigours, we should then assist nature in her work by applying warm emolient poultices which favours the formation of matter. The treatment however depends somewhat according to the part affected.

When we see that gangreene is taking place, for we can discover a tendency to gangreene from the frequent pulse, together with the che

and temperature which takes place in the part, we can do no more than sup-
-port the system by stimulants and tonics; perhaps some aplication to the part which would prevent the disagreeable ~~smell~~ scent which is the consequence of the gan-
-grene, would add ~~[illegible]~~ to the comfort of both patient & attendants

Having made these general observations I have accomplished what I proposed to myself in en-
-tering on this subject. Of its imperfections I am fully sensible at the same time I submit it to your consideration cheerfully, as well from a consciousness of having exerted myself in the performance of my duty to the best of my ~~[illegible]~~ abilities as from a belief that the learned & honourable body to whose it is addressed will not [illegible] it with rigid scrutiny — [illegible]
all these deficiencies —